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OFFICE OF INFORMATION
DEPARTMENT
of
AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

No. 28 A.

FOR USE
IN WEEK
BEGINNING
MAY 6, 1918.

OUR PART IN FEEDING THE NATION.

(Special Information Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.)

HELPING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO MARKET.



The Bureau of Markets Uses Leased Wires to Gather Market Information Which Goes to More Than 50,000 Individuals in 32 States.

Daily Reports Eliminate Guesswork in Shipping.

Service by Department of Agriculture to Growers, Shippers and Dealers Helps to Prevent Gluts—Shows Daily Picture of Market Conditions Throughout Country—How to Get Reports.

The station agent at Highland wired his division superintendent "four cars strawberries to Chicago." The superintendent added these four cars to figures received from other station agents, and wired the total to the Department of Agriculture at Washington.

The agent at Highland wondered why anyone should want to know about cars of strawberries moving to Chicago. A few years ago his Uncle Henry had "gone broke" raising strawberries because he couldn't sell them for enough to pay his expenses. While he was wondering about this, messages were coming to Washington from all railroads and soon word was flashed back to points in producing sections showing that a total of 40 cars of strawberries were on the way to Chicago, and that comparatively few shipments were going to other important markets.

"Forty cars will swamp the Chicago market tomorrow," said a strawberry man, who received the wire from Washington, and he reached for the telephone. Messages went to railroad offi-

ducing sections, covered in 1917, 21 commodities, including strawberries, tomatoes, peaches, cantaloupes, onions, potatoes, apples, grapes, watermelons, and asparagus. Each report carries market information from most of the large cities as well as giving shipping point information.

Farmers or others wishing to receive any of these reports from field agents should apply to the Bureau of Markets, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

MAKE SWEET POTATO FLOUR.

Sweet potatoes, dried and ground into a flour in an ordinary kitchen coffee grinder, can be used in a variety of ways in cooking. Specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture believe that in many localities where sweet potatoes are abundant the making of sweet potato flour in the home may furnish a practical way to save the sweet potatoes from spoiling. The flour will keep well in dry containers.

To make the flour the potatoes should first be cut into small lengthwise pieces and thoroughly dried. A small drier that fits on top of the oven or warming closet of a range or gas stove can be used. If an electric fan is available it will serve admirably. The nut knife of a meat grinder also can be used for this purpose. Flour made by such process can be kept for some time if put into a dry container, or the flour may be made from the dry potatoes as it is needed. A quart of the dry potatoes makes a cup of flour.

The use of sweet potato flour in cake or bread making will materially reduce the amount of other flour used. The proportions may be half and half. When used in cakes the sugar could also be reduced a little. Sweet potato flour is useful as a thickening agent, having the same value in this respect as corn starch. Recipes for the use of sweet potato flour have been tested and found to be excellent by food specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

WHEN CANNING FOR MARKET.

Housewives and canning club members who wish to sell their canned products are urged by the Bureau of Markets, U. S. Department of Agriculture, to study their markets at the beginning of the season and pack according to local demands for different products. Secure orders for canned goods before putting them up, is the advice of the specialists. Small lots of non-standardized products are difficult to sell except among local buyers and are not purchased by the Army, Navy, commercial dealers, or any department of the Government.

Home-canned food can be kept over from one season to the next, and those who have not sold their goods have reserves to draw from for their home table. It is good policy, say the specialists, for the housewife to provide a reasonable surplus beyond the probable home consumption for the next crop year. While the Bureau of Markets is giving aid to producers on marketing problems, it says that it is difficult to place producers of small quantities of different kinds of products in touch with buyers. It urges home and club canners to learn the marketing end of their business just as do producers in other lines of industry.

BETTER TO DRILL THAN CHECK WEAK SEED CORN.

Where necessary to plant weak seed corn, checking is not as satisfactory as drilling, according to specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Plant right at first—plant the extra amount of seed at first, for replanting means additional work, late planting, and uneven and late maturity. Drilled corn is easily thinned. Harrows or cultivators can be used in thinning by driving across the corn rows. Without the loss of time, the thinning can proceed for several weeks while the corn is being cultivated and is growing, but replanting is altogether unsatisfactory and usually unprofitable.

cials to divert certain cars headed for Chicago to other cities where strawberries were not abundant.

Next day Chicago received only 20 cars of strawberries instead of the 40 that would have gone there except for the market news service of the Bureau of Markets. Chicago could use 20 cars but not 40, and because the other 20 cars went to different markets many growers received checks that gave them a profit on their shipments.

HELPING THE UNCLE HENRYS.

Guesswork in marketing of fruits and vegetables has gone. The market news service is working for many "Uncle Henrys" and also for dealers and consumers. No one profits when a city receives more of any fruit or vegetable than it can consume, and as a means of correcting such a condition it is necessary to know how much produce is en route to that city.

The market news service for fruits and vegetables, with its many agents and with assistance from railroad officials, gives daily a picture of market conditions throughout the country for both shipper and dealer and places this picture in the form of a typed report in the hands of all persons interested. The Bureau of Markets uses leased wires to gather this information and furnishes market news, including prices and supplies, to more than 50,000 individuals in 32 states. The reports, which are issued simultaneously in many cities and in pro-